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ABSTRACT

The report outlines achievements of a 27-month project designed to develop and implement a curriculum approach for increasing peer acceptance and interaction of mainstreamed exceptional students. Project efforts listed include development of classroom observation procedures and the use of those procedures to observe 20 mainstreamed classrooms; interviews with teachers and graduate students in special and regular education; and development of a curriculum. It is explained that the curriculum was evaluated in four different settings serving severely language handicapped and otherwise disabled children in mainstreamed settings. Among findings from the curriculum evaluation were that slower and shy children needed coaching with an adult to become skilled at the games before being paired with another child and that adults needed to model and reinforce clear and positive communication between students during the tasks. Dissemination activities described include presentation of teacher workshops and preparation of manuals explaining the curriculum. Among appendixes are sample teacher interviews and results from a list of behaviors associated with students' poor social skills. (CL)

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March, 1980

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Performance Report

Special Project - Planned Positive Peer Interaction: An Approach for Facilitating the Integration of Exceptional Learners in Regular Classrooms

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University of California, Los Angeles

Agency Award No.: G007702856 and G007801688

I. Comparison of actual accomplishments to the goals established for the period.

Contained within the original grant application were three principal objectives to be accomplished during a 27 month time line, extending from July 1977 through October 1979. In fact, the total period for which the project was funded was 27 months, from late September 1977 through December 1979.

Three principal objectives and their subgoals described below are those stated in the original grant:

A. Develop specific curricular approaches for increasing the peer interaction and social acceptability of exceptional children.

1) Observe and study regular classroom settings in which exceptional learners have been integrated. Assess opportunities for initiating planned positive peer interactions.
2) Interview regular classroom teachers with respect to possibilities for developing positive peer interactions.
3) Formulate various curricular approaches for increasing social acceptability of integrated exceptional children in regular classrooms.

B. Evaluate the effects of implementation of the curriculum.

C. Disseminate specific curricular approaches developed in the project.

EC 150093

1) Present workshops for teachers.
2) Prepare manual detailing curricular approaches for distribution on an in-state and out-of-state basis.

The actual accomplishments for the period ending December 1979 will be discussed in terms of the objectives stated above.

1) Observe and study classroom settings.

1a) After evaluating various types of observational procedures described in classroom research in the literature, observational procedures for this project were developed. Observational guidelines were established for recording positive, negative and lack of interaction between classmates and opportunities for children to interact with one another.

1b) From mid-January through February 1978, 20 classrooms in 2 different schools within the Santa Monica School District were observed. These 2 schools represented different SES and cultural compositions. Types of classes observed included special day classes for learning handicapped, resource rooms, bilingual programs and regular kindergarten through 6th grade classes. Children were observed throughout the full school day. This meant that children were observed during lunch in the cafeteria and on the playground, during physical education, during recess, as well as throughout the time in class. Children were also observed in assemblies, library time, and other special activities that are normally included in the school program. In sum, the hours of observation were rotated so that the children of any given class were observed for the equivalent of at least one full day and on the average of three full days. In all settings, opportunities for potential planned positive peer interactions were recorded, including number of children, setting within classroom (or school day), type of activity, and materials used. In particular, children integrated from special educational settings into regular class settings were observed in both of their educational settings for their spontaneous social interactions with teachers and their classmates.

1c) In April 1978, children integrated from a multiply handicapped classroom in the Santa Monica School District to regular physical education programs and to special day classes were observed for one week.

2) Interview teachers.

2a) Team leaders from all classes at the University Elementary School affiliated with the University of California, Los Angeles, were personally interviewed during the time period from October 27, 1977, through February 2, 1978. There were six separate interviews conducted, each consisting from 40 to 60 minutes. Appendix A is a copy of the form used by the person conducting the interview, including possible prompts, and Appendix B is a copy of the format used to record the teachers' responses. The purposes of these interviews were to determine the following: 1) the characteristics of normal children who work best with exceptional children, 2) the assets and liabilities of individual exceptional children, 3) activities that have been found effective in involving exceptional children positively with normal children, including suggestions for pairing and teaming activities, and 4) problems involved in pairing or grouping exceptional children with their normal classmates.

2b) Personal interviews were conducted with each of the 20 classroom teachers who had volunteered to participate in the Santa Monica School District observations. Interviews were structured in the same way as described above.

2c) During November 1977, 11 master's level students from California State University at Los Angeles responded to the interview form in writing. These individuals were teachers of regular and special education classes, ranging from kindergarten through secondary school. Years of experience ranged from 2 to 21 years, averaging 8.3 years.

2d) In March 1978, teachers attending a conference in northern California were surveyed using the questionnaire described in Appendix C. The questionnaire's purpose was to elicit from teachers activities and approaches they might use in response to specific situations involving children with poor peer interactions. Respondants to the questionnaire were individuals from throughout the State of California, including the following: 25 teachers from regular grades K-6, averaging 11.7 years of experience; 8 special educators with an average of 7 years of experience; and 5 school psychologists.

2e) Small group discussions were held at each of two in-service meetings with Santa Monica resource teachers and with Santa Monica special day class teachers in the months of April and May, 1978, respectively. In each of these discussion sessions, teachers generated a list of descriptors of children having difficulty with peer interactions. Then on an individual basis, teachers rank-ordered these descriptors in terms of their importance in peer interactions and described possible interventions for one or two problem areas they had considered to be most important. In addition, resource teachers rank-ordered the social problems found most troubling to the teachers, themselves. Appendices D and E list the descriptors generated by the teachers and indicate the rank-order given by the respective groups.

2f) During July and August, 1978, 200 credential and master's degree level students attending special education classes at California State University at Los Angeles completed questionnaires regarding pupil behaviors associated with poor peer interaction. They rated the importance of behaviors suggested, in part, by the Santa Monica special education teachers. Appendix F is a copy of the survey. Appendix G illustrates the mean values for each of the survey items.

Factor analysis of the survey results yielded four patterns of behaviors associated with poor peer interaction: (a) indirectly obnoxious, (b) directly obnoxious, (c) self-isolating, and (d) rejected. The indirectly obnoxious child seems to be a whiner and tattler, and tends to have no friends as a result. The directly obnoxious child, or alienator, appears to be verbally abusive, physically abusive, touches others inappropriately, and makes fun of others. The self-isolating child prefers to sit alone, seldom initiates contact with peers, declines to join in activities when asked, tends to have a sad or expressionless face, and has no identifiable friends. The rejected child is isolated by others because of his behaviors of being physically abusive, making fun of others, whining, being bossy and tattling. While these patterns are suggestive rather than conclusive, it is possible that these clusters of behaviors may help teachers find those children most in need of planned positive peer interaction.

The professional background of the respondants influenced the rating of the survey items. Teachers tended to rate as most important verbally abusive and physically abusive behaviors. Counselors, of the other hand, rated sits alone, seldom initiates contact with others and declines to join in activities as more important to poor peer interaction than did teachers.

3) Formulate curricular approaches.

3a) Throughout the grant period, relevant literature was reviewed, including the following topic areas: perceived similarities, role playing, liking-disliking, classroom and grouping arrangements, (cooperative behavior, and sociometric techniques. In addition to researching the underlying dimensions influencing the selection and maintenance of friendships and cooperative behavior, specific activities and approaches for facilitating planned positive peer interaction were investigated.

3b) Data gathered during the Santa Monica observations regarding the opportunities for planned positive peer interaction and the activities actually observed served as the second source of information to develop the curriculum.

3c) Ideas drawn from the various interviews and questionnaires served as the third base of information for developing curricular activities and approaches.

3d) A working manual was completed in Novmeber 1978. The manual consisted of two basic parts: a narrative of basic information needed by teachers to develop planned positive peer interaction, and 42 specific activities designed by project members. Activities were developed for dyads, small groups, large groups and entire classes of children, appropriate for different grade levels.

3e) From December 1978 to March 1979, dyad activities in which children are indispensable to each other for the successful completion of the game were developed.

3f) A final draft of the manual for planned positive peer interaction is in preparation. The final draft includes a section of indispensability activities and expands the number of specific activities from 42 to 50. A copy of the manual will be forwarded to the Office of Education within 30 days.

B. Evaluate the effects of implementation of the curriculum.

The curriculum was evaluated in four different settings, Los Angeles Unified School District, University Elementary School, Kit Carson Elementary School, and Los Angeles County Schools.

1) Los Angeles Unified School District.

For a period of three months (November 1978 through January 1979), 23 teachers of the severely language handicapped (SLH/Aphasia) evaluated the working manual. The teachers were introduced to the concepts of the project and the manual through an in-service training meeting. Teachers used the curriculum activities in their own classrooms (of approximately 8 pupils each). They also suggested the activities to regular

class teachers. The SLH teachers evaluated the usefulness of the background information as well as the specific activities.

A total of 34 different activities were used by the SLH teachers with children ranging in grade level from preschool to upper elementary. Many activities were tried by four or five teachers, and some activities were used by as many as ten different teachers. All teachers evaluated at least two different activities each. One teacher tried seven different activities, and many teachers used three or more.

The general response to the background information was positive. Teachers felt that it either provided them with new and useful information or reminded them of helpful information they had forgotten to incorporate in their teaching. Many indicated that the background information would be especially valuable to regular class teachers.

The specific activities received the highest ratings for their practicality. Instructions were considered clear. The activities were considered successful in promoting peer interactions within an educationally relevant context. For example, verbal expression and left-right orientation was said to be enhanced. Many teachers stated that they anticipated trying more of the activities after the evaluation period was over.

Teachers reported that the children showed great interest and enjoyment while participating in the activities. Teachers felt that the activities helped develop positive self-concept and responsiveness to others. However, many teachers found it necessary to guide and tightly control the activities so that the children would stay on-task.

2) University Elementary School (UES), University of California, Los Angeles.

During a ten week period (March 15 through May 1979), 50 children at the University Elementary School participated in the indispensability activities designed during the previous months. Activities were tested with children ranging in age from 5 to 12 years.

First, a 3PI project member trained or coached a child to play a game, such as the pan game (see Appendix H). The project member first played the part of dispatcher then later switched roles with the child so that the child would have practice being the dispatcher. Next, the project member paired the trained child with a child who was unfamiliar with the game. The coached child served as dispatcher while the project member supervised and assisted the children. Finally, the children switched roles.

Project members noted a generally high level of interest in the games by the children, particularly the younger ones. Some children reported that they liked the games because they could tell that the other person really listened to them, and several stated that the activities were a good way to get to know someone.

During the sessions, two important points become evident to the project members: (a) slower and shy children need sufficient coaching (increased amount of time or number of trials) with an adult to become proficient at the games before being paired with another child, and (b) adults need to model and reinforce clear and positive communication between children during the activities (see Communication Guidelines, Appendix H). It also appears that when the project member had a good time playing with a child, that child in turn had a more enjoyable exchange with children to whom he was subsequently paired. In addition, same sex pairings seemed to be more relaxed and enjoyable for many children, especially at the oldest age levels.

3) Kit Carson Elementary School - School for the language handicapped, Hawthorne, California.

During four weeks of the 1979 summer school session, 20 children, their 4 teachers and 4 aides participated in the evaluation of the indispensability activities. Selected learning handicapped children attending Kit Carson School were coached by project members on the activities which had been most successful in the UES evaluation. These "target" children taught other children in their respective classrooms under the supervision of project members. The pairings of the children was counter-balanced so that a target child participated in 3PI activities an equal number of times with each of his classmates.

Sociometric data taken at the end of the four weeks yielded no significant results. However, one teacher noted a definite improvement in the behavior of the target children in her class, and an increased acceptance on the part of the other classmates toward the target children. This teacher encouraged five other teachers to incorporate the indispensability activities into their teaching, as a part of the 3PI evaluation.

4) Itinerant Teacher Program - Los Angeles County Schools.

Six itinerant teachers, whose main role is to facilitate the successful mainstreaming of exceptional children into regular classrooms, evaluated the indispensability activities from October 1979 to February 1980. These six teachers were instructed in the activities by 3PI project members during an in-service meeting. Teachers were provided with all the materials needed to play the games. A 3PI project member was available as a consultant to the teachers throughout the evaluation period.

A total of 25 mainstreamed children and 76 regular education pupils were taught the indispensability activities by the itinerant teachers. The pan game was used about 116 times during the fall semester by the six teachers, with three other indispensability games played approximately 20 times each.

All teachers reported that the children enjoyed the games and regarded the activities as a special treat. Dyads showed increased interest in each other during the activities. The reports of the teachers confirmed two points that the 3PI members had anticipated: (1) In order to gain the best result in increasing positive peer interaction, the games need to be initiated during the first week of school, before negative impressions are formed. It would be preferable if an exceptional child could play the games with children from a regular education class before being mainstreamed into that class. (2) Repeated pairing between two children on the activities is required to establish spontaneous and on-going peer contacts. Finally, the itinerant teachers found that most regular education teachers were receptive, interested, and supportive in the use of the activities.

C. Disseminate specific curricular approaches developed in the project.

1) Present workshops for teachers.

The activities described in the working manual, and the basic concepts of planned positive peer interaction were presented to teachers working toward special education credentials in the following four settings:

a) California State University, Northridge. "Severe Language Disorders/Aphasia." Fall 1978, Spring, 1979, Fall 1979.

b) Pacific Oaks College, Pasadena. "Assessment and creating an accomodating environment." Fall 1978.

c) Northwest Nazarene College, Utah. "Writing the IEP." Summer workshop, 1979.

d) Pepperdine University, Irvine Campus. "Instructional methodologies for the learning handicapped." Fall 1979.

In each of these presentation, the activities were well-received. Teachers believed that the activities would be very beneficial in achieving positive interactions between mainstreamed and regular students.

2) Prepare manual detailing curricular approaches for national distribution. The revised and expanded manual of curricular approaches and specific activities is in the final phases of

preparation. The Council for Exceptional Children has expressed an interest in publishing the manual and distributing it nationally on a non-profit basis.

II. Cases where established goals were not met.

The three major objectives set forth in the original grant application were accomplished. The details of the curriculum evaluation had to be modified, however, to accomodate the school personnel participating in the evaluation. Dissemination in terms of four major workshops was deleted due to the difficulty in obtaining evaluative assessment in a timely manner. The project efforts, therefore, were focused on evaluating the curriculum and developing the manual during the second year of funding.

III. Other pertinent information.

The financial statement has already been filed with the Office of Education, indicating that the project operated within the budget for the period erding December 31, 1979.

APPENDIX A

Interview Form

As a teacher we know that in your classroom you have had both children who were well accepted and not well accepted. We are doing a study to determine what are the characteristics of children who are well accepted and children who are not well accepted. We are also interested in having you tell us about things you've done to help a low accepted child gain greater acceptance.

1. Based on your experience, what are children like who are well accepted by their classmates?

Characteristics

A. Physical

attire
strength
maturity
sex
athletic skill/ability
ethnic status
grooming
hygiene
coordination
attractiveness

B. Personality

sense of humor
helping behavior
cooperative
sportsmanship
persistent
responsible
leadership
sharing behavior
pleasant, easy going
independent
loyal

C. Ability

intelligent
musical
creative
academically successful
artistic

D. Family

economic	size
siblings	support

2. Based on your experience what are children like who are not well accepted by their classmates?

Characteristics

A. Physical

attire	ethnic status
weak	poor grooming
immature	poor hygiene
sex	poor coordination
poor athletic skill/ability	unattractive
physical handicap	

B. Personality

withdraws	avoids attention
seeks attention	destructive
lacks control	immature
defiant	submissive
makes excuses	nervous
timid	depressed
dependent	excitable
cruel	stubborn
distractible	daydreams
compulsive	impulsive

C. Lack of ability

low intelligence

poor academically

D. Family

economic

size

siblings

lack of support

3. Based on your experience what things could a teacher do to help a low acceptance child gain greater acceptance?

A. Physical structure of the room

learning centers

seating arrangements

flexible movement patterns

free choice/quiet areas

study carrels

indoor/outdoor alternatives

B. Classroom activities and materials

assignment of duties

cooperative games

social skills curriculum/values clarification

learning center activities

C. Other members of the class

pairing/big brother

peer tutoring

modeling

classroom orientation

D. Target child

privileges

scheduling

differentiated assignments

coaching

direct instruction

home contact

reinforcement

special services

APPENDIX B

3PI
Interview Form

School_____ Date_____

Grade Level_____ Interviewer's Name_____

Years of Teaching Experience_____

As a teacher we know that in your classroom you have had both children who were well accepted and not well accepted. We are doing a study to determine what are the characteristics of children who are well accepted and children who are not well accepted. We are also interested in having you tell us about things you've done to help a low accepted child gain greater acceptance.

1. Based on your experience, what are children like who are well accepted by their classmates?

Physical

Personality

Ability

Family

2. Based on your experience what are children like who are not well accepted by their classmates?

Physical

Personality

Ability

Family

3. Based on your experience what things could a teacher do to help a low acceptance child gain greater acceptance?

Physical Structure of the Room

Classroom Activities and Materials

Other Members of the Class

Target Child

4. Based on your experience, what things did you do that were not successful for you?

Physical Structure of the Room

Classroom Activities and Materials

Other Members of the Class

Target Child

5. Have you ever worked with children who had been referred for part or full time special education services?

Which of these children were well accepted?

Which of these children were not well accepted?

What did you do that was successful?

What did you do that was not successful?

What else do you think might work to make a low accepted child become more acceptable?

APPENDIX C

A project is currently being conducted at UCLA to find ways of promoting more positive interactions between children in school. Of particular concern are children who are non-participants and those who are rejected by their peers. As a teacher you have probably had such children in your classroom. On the attached pages are five questions asking about approaches, activities, or games that might promote positive peer interactions. Would you take a few minutes to respond to these questions based on your ideas and experience? Thank you very much for your cooperation.

If you would like to receive a copy of the final report describing the project's findings regarding ways of promoting positive peer interactions, please write your name and address below. In the interest of confidentially, please tear off this sheet and hand it in separately from the questionnaire.

* *

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip Code _____

What grade level do you teach now? _____ How many years have you taught? _____ If a secondary teacher, what subject(s) to you teach?

_____

If you need extra space for any of the following questions, feel free to use the back of this paper.

1. What could be done in general in a classroom to promote friendships and cooperation among children? Please include any pupil grouping procedures or seating arrangements which may be helpful.

2. A child who has been previously placed full time in special education will be mainstreamed into your classroom. What could be done to prepare the class for this child's integration and to increase the chances of his or her interacting more positively with the other children?

3. What specific approaches, activities, or games could be used by teachers to promote greater participation by children who are usually shy or withdrawn?

4. Some children are rejected by their peers (for example, being the object of ridicule or not chosen for games) because of their behavior, such as being bullies or socially inappropriate. What specific approaches, activities or games could be used to help these children interact more positively with peers?

5. Any additional comments:

Thank you.

APPENDIX D

List of Behaviors Generated by Elementary School Teachers Characterizing Children with Poor Social Skills: (Resource Room Specialists)	Rank Order of those Characteristics that Bother - Teachers Most	Children Most
Poor Hygiene (smells, dirty clothes)		11.5
Too dependent on special help	4	
Truant		
Physically aggressive	3	1
Tardy		
Lacks self-motivation	5	
Lack of flexibility (resists change)		
Verbally defiant	9	8.5
Self-stimulation		
Uses handicap as excuse		
Inappropriate behavior out of class (playground,cafeteria)	10	4
Clumsy		10
Poor sportsmanship		2
Low academic skills	7.5	
Doesn't take responsibility	6	
Lacks sport skills		6
Unprepared	2.5	
Disorganized	11	
Whiner		7
Tattler		3
Complainer	2.5	5
Lacks social awareness		8.5
Speaks verbal obscenities		11.5
Verbal confrontations		
Doesn't pay attention	1	
Can't delay gratification		
Catalyst for upsetting others	7.5	
Highly creative		

APPENDIX E

List of Behaviors Generated by Elementary Special Day Class Teachers Characterizing Children with Poor Peer Social Interaction:	Rank order of those characteristic that teachers believe are most bothersome to classmates:
Verbally abusive, tormenting, provocative	1.5
Inappropriate physical contact, touching	4
Self-stimulation that isolates self from others	
Language and speech problems	
Can't handle competition	
Can't work cooperatively	
Grabbing equipment of materials	
Stigmatizing labels	
hysically unattractive	
Poor motor skills: fine and gross	
Poor athletic skills	
Doesn't know game rules (as in kickball, baseball)	
Physically aggressive, hitting	3
Can't handle being teased	
Teases others	1.5
Tattling	
Name calling	5
Attention seeking	
Doesn't respect other's property	
Needs to be first	
Cuts in line	
Bossy, must be in charge	
Bullying	
Cussing	
Making fun of others	6
Upset when touched physically	
Upset when schedule changes	
Isolates self	
Makes wierd noises	
Screams, yells unnecessarily	
Unable to share	7
Crying	
Tantrums	
Can't follow directions	
Only has one friend	

UCLA SURVEY

The UCLA program in Special Education is conducting a study concerned with ways of helping children interact more favorably in the classroom. We would greatly appreciate your taking a few minutes of your time to complete the survey. First we would like to know the following about your teaching experience:

Years as an elementary teacher _____ Years as a special education teacher_____

Years as a secondary teacher _____ What is your present position _____

_____?

There are two parts to the survey. Part One is concerned with characteristics children display that often result in poor interaction with others. Part Two is concerned with techniques or approaches you might have used to help children interact more favorably.

Part One

Please read through the following list of 14 characteristics that often lead to poor interactions before making any ratings. At the end of the list there is space for you to add characteristics not listed that you think often lead to unfavorable interactions among children. Following this, please re-read the list and rate each characteristic (including those you have added) in terms of how important you think it is in causing poor interactions among children. Rate each characteristic by circling the number that reflects its degree of importance. Circling a "5" would indicate you think the characteristic is "extremely important" in causing poor interactions. Circling a "1" would indicate you consider the characteristic as "not important at all" in causing poor interactions. The other numbers reflect degrees of importance that are in between a "5" and a "1".

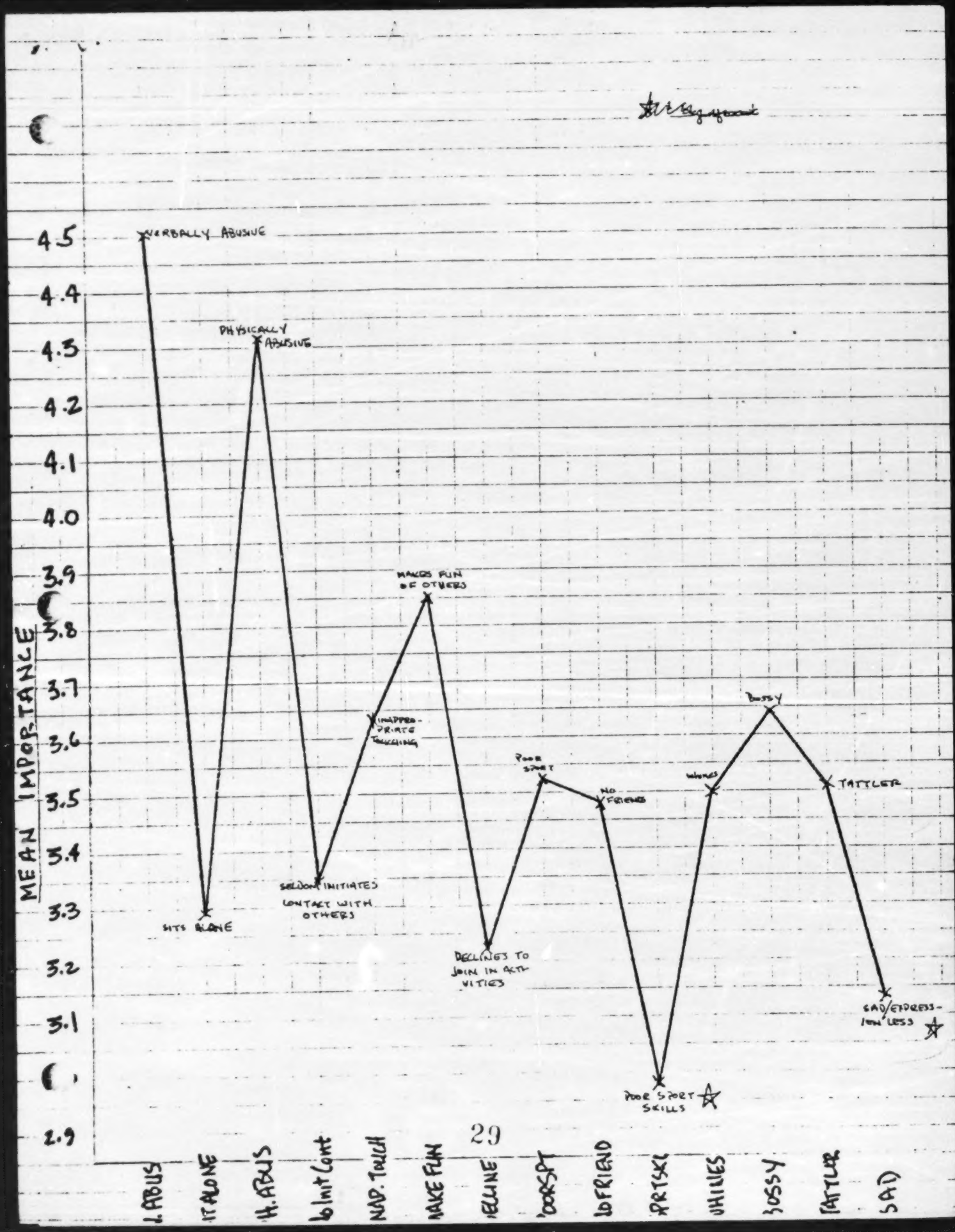
Characteristics	Not Important at all	Slightly Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. Is verbally abusive, tormenting, cruel	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
2. Prefers to sit alone at recess, lunch, on the playground	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
3. Is physically aggressive; hits, pokes, pushes	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
4. Seldom initiates contact with others	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
5. Engages in inappropriate physical touching, clinging	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
6. Makes fun of others, teases, name calls	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
7. Declines to join in activities when asked	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

	Important at all	Slightly Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
8. Is a poor sport, doesn't follow game rules	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
9. Has no identifiable friends	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
10. Lacks sports skills, is poorly coordinated	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
11. Whines, complains, acts babyish	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
12. Is bossy; must have own way, be first	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
13. Is constant tattler	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
14. Looks sad or expressionless; rarely laughs	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
15. _____	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
16. _____	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
17. _____	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Part Two

In the space provided below, please describe any specific activities you have used in your classroom to help children interact more favorably with their classmates. (Feel free to use the back of the sheet(s)).

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP!


MEAN IMPORTANCE
4.5
4.4
4.3
4.2
4.1
4.0
3.9
3.8
3.7
3.6
3.5
3.4
3.3
3.2
3.1
2.9
VERBALLY ABUSIVE
PHYSICALLY ABUSIVE
SITS ALONE
SELDOM INITIATES CONTACT WITH OTHERS
INAPPROPRIATE TOUCHING
MAKES FUN OF OTHERS
DECLINES TO JOIN IN ACTIVITIES
POOR SPORT
NO FRIENDS
POOR SPORT SKILLS
WHINES
BOSSY
TATTLER
SAD/EXPRESSIONLESS
1. ABUS
IT ALONE
H. ABUS
6 Init Cont
NAP. Touch
MAKE FUN
IECLINE
'OORSPT
10 FRIEND
RTSKI
UHINES
30SSY
TATTLER
SAD